CAVE PAINTINGS

Arts & Languages

~ StandFor Projects

Teacher Notes

Arts & Languages	History & Humanities	Science
Baroque	Education in Athens	A-maize-ing corn
Cave paintings	Life in a medieval castle	Biofuels
Cinema: the seventh art	Napoleon Bonaparte	Cleaning up the oceans
Components of a comic book	Rise and fall of the Berlin Wall	How much water do you use a day?
Dance	Scribes in Ancient Egypt	How they communicate
Egyptian hieroglyphs	The *Belle Époque* and the Armed Peace	Hurricanes
From the stone to the Internet	The city of the gods	Nuclear contamination
How does a newsroom work?	The first universities	Petroleum
How to become cultured?	The Great Pyramid of Giza	Preventing droughts
National Library	The Macedonian Empire	Star maps
Renaissance Florence	The medieval table	The El Niño phenomenon
The cultural leap	Who are the major Greek gods and goddesses?	The legacy of an idea
		The origins of earthquakes
		The ozone layer
		The senses
		Uses of water

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StandFor

#EXPLORING THE TOPIC

1 Let's start by paying attention to the tittle of the infographic.

The purpose of this question is to make students think about the most primary function of art: to express human ideas and feelings.

a) What do you think prehistoric people painted in caves?

Suggested answer: Prehistoric people painted events of their daily routine, especially hunting.

b) What materials do you think prehistoric people used to paint with?

Suggested answer: Rocks, plants, and pigments found in nature.

c) In your opinion, why did prehistoric people paint in caves?

Suggested answer: They wanted to communicate; to record what they saw at the time; to make art.

2 Read the introduction and pay attention to the center illustration of the infographic. What does it show?

a) ( ) Altamira Cave, Spain.
b) (✓) Cave of the Hands, Argentina.
c) ( ) Cave of Beasts, Egypt.
d) (✓) Lauscaux Caves, France.
e) ( ) Magura Cave, Bulgaria.

Ask students to skim the introductory text and the central illustration in order to get the general idea of the infographic. They should do it quickly without worrying about the vocabulary at this time.

3 How can you relate these two images? What do they have in common?

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Oli Opi/Shutterstock.com

3. The purpose of this question is to make students think about the fact that both types of art – cave painting and graffiti – were (and are) made in public spaces which are places that people often attend on a daily basis.

Suggested answer: Both pictures represent an artistic expression. They are made in public spaces.

My glossary

K-W-L chart

I know about this topic	I want to know	I learned

Cave paintings

The first human artistic expressions date from the Paleolithic period. The Lascaux Caves are considered the foremost expression of cave paintings.

LASCAUX CAVE COMPLEX

15,500 B.C.
AGE OF THE PAINTINGS

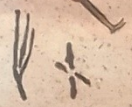
1,800
GROUPS OF IMAGES

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Animals

People

Signs



THE HALLS

HALL OF THE BULLS

In this section, three groups of animals are depicted: bulls, deers and horses.

THE "UNICORN" FIGURE

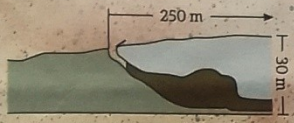
A "unicorn" (a mythical horse with a horn) that leads a group of animals into the cave.

ENTRANCE

At the end of the Paleolithic.

During the prehistoric period, a gentle slope led to an entrance that was slowly covered over with sediments due to the effects of erosion.

In 1940, the year they were discovered.



These sediments had been accumulating for thousands of years. Finally, a cave-in completely blocked the entrance to the cave.

THE PASSAGEWAY

Once decorated with engravings and paintings, but now in deteriorated condition.

THE SHAFT

DEPTH 5 m

This area has one of the most impressive scenes in the cave: THE DEAD MAN.

1. A man fights against a bison while a rhinoceros escapes to the left.
2. A bison with its head down shakes its tail as if it were in an attack position.
3. A bird's head stick in the scene indicates that the man could have been a spear thrower.
4. Signs that seem to be made with a kind of spear.

Scale in meters
0 5 10

250 m
TOTAL LENGTH

THE APSE

A semi-spherica
figures, most of

DIAMETER 5 m

Dome
horses

Sept. 8th, 1940
Discovered by four teenagers, the paintings had been intact for thousands of years.

1945
After World War II the caves became a tourist attraction.

1948
Visits by one million tourists have damaged the natural balance of the cave.

1963
The French Minister of Culture, André Malraux, decides to close the caves to the public.

1983
A replica of the cave was open at the foot of the hill where the original complex was found.

AXIAL GALLERY

HEIGHT 3.5 – 4 m

It is considered as the Sistine Chapel of cave paintings.

The paintings are on the top of the walls and inside the vaults.

THE NAVE

Its walls feature five panels, many of which are engravings.

GREAT BLACK COW
This figure faces the back of the chamber. It seems to be leading a herd of horses, most of whom are facing away.

THE CROSSED BISONS
These paintings try to give a three-dimensional sensation by means of different techniques such as the distorted figures and asymmetrical compositions.

HOW DID THEY PAINT?

Natural products were used to make different pigments.

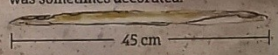
Sticks covered with moss or animal skin were used as brushes, and the outlines were drawn with stones. Certain colors may have been applied by blowing the pigments through hollow bamboo shoots.

THE OBJECTS

The caves were sanctuaries. Only the ones with natural light at the entrance were used as housing.

LAMPS
Torches made of red clay burnt with animal fat. There were also torches made of branches of coniferous trees.

WEAPONS
Azagaia, a short spear made of bones, was sometimes decorated.



ORNAMENTS
Seashells were worn as jewels.

CHAMBER OF THE FELINES

MAXIMUM WIDTH: LESS THAN 1 m

Features six felines.
The painting finishes with a double line formed by three red dots.

THE APSE

A semi-spherical room featuring over 1,000 figures, most of which are engravings.

DIAMETER 5 m

Dome	Middle part	Bottom part
horses	deer	wild bulls

› TWO DIFFERENT STYLES OF CAVE PAINTINGS

FRANCO-CANTABRIAN REGION	LEVANTINE AREA
The Magdalenian period (15,000–11,000 B.C.)	**The Mesolithic period (10,000–5,000 B.C.)**
The paintings are in caves with no daylight. The representations are naturalistic. The figures are fully painted, not just outlined. There are more animals than anthropomorphic figures. The drawings are polychromatic (in red, black and ochre).	The paintings are done in rocky open shelters, and represent hunting scenes, ritual dances and daily life. Human figures are well-defined. The monochromatic paintings have weak colors (red and black). The style is schematic and expressive.

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#GUIDED READING

Suggested activity
If possible, set some time aside to make a virtual tour of the Lascaux caves with students. Go to the website: <www.lascaux.culture.fr>. Accessed Sept. 1st, 2017. You can also get students to visit the website by themselves (in this case, some basic knowledge of English, French, German or Spanish is necessary). It is important as a follow up activity that students exchange information about what they saw, always with the help of the teacher.

2 Map

The left-hand side of the infographic has a geographic location map. Its style is similar to the ones found in books, magazines and on the Internet. It highlights the location of Lascaux, in southwestern France.

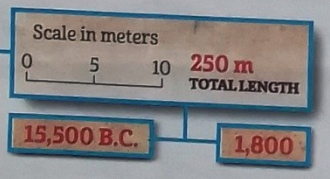
1 Covering the image

One large illustration covers almost the entire infographic. It works as the basis to which different elements of the infographic are linked. Try to cover the map, starting at the entrance of the caves, which is marked by a small white arrow. Notice that the information linked to the image explains each part of the caves, and shows the location of the paintings.

- Look at just the highlighted images and try to identify what animals are depicted.

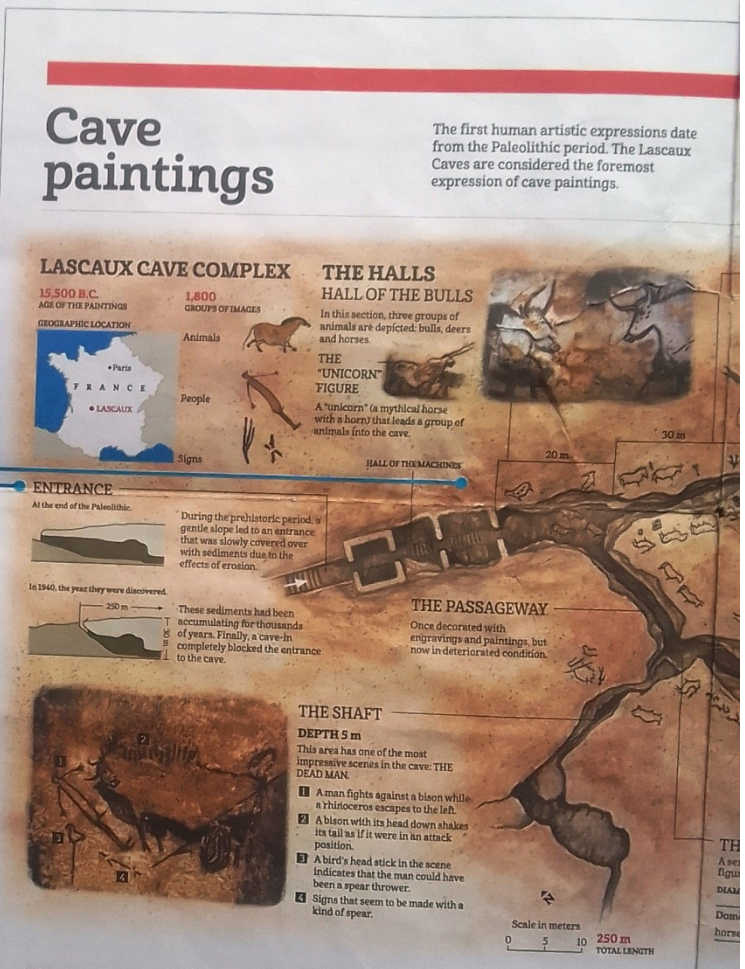
1. Students might possibly identify bison, cows, horses, bulls, felines, etc. Tell them these records provide important material that helps scientists to determine what kind of animals lived in the prehistoric period, and their relation to humans. Only fossils of some of these animals remain today, so the paintings have become central to understanding prehistoric fauna.

3. Challenge students to discuss the possible conditions for these paintings to be made. For example, ask if they believe that the caves were the home of prehistoric people, or if the caves were just a specific place to make paintings. To make it more demanding, compare the cave paintings to modern graffiti. Like the paintings in the caves, graffiti is also painted on walls.



3 Numerical data

Note that plenty of statistics appear throughout the infographic, such as dimensions, dates, and scales. It would be useful to do an interpretative reading of this information by using some actual references taken from everyday situations in order to measure the size of the caves and some of the animals shown.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GROUPS OF IMAGES
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•Paris
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Animals
People
Signs
THE HALLS
HALL OF THE BULLS
In this section, three groups of animals are depicted: bulls, deers and horses.
THE "UNICORN" FIGURE
A "unicorn" (a mythical horse with a horn) that leads a group of animals into the cave.
30 m
20 m
HALL OF THE MACHINES
ENTRANCE
At the end of the Paleolithic.
During the prehistoric period, a gentle slope led to an entrance that was slowly covered over with sediments due to the effects of erosion.
In 1940, the year they were discovered.
250 m
These sediments had been accumulating for thousands of years. Finally, a cave-in completely blocked the entrance to the cave.
THE PASSAGEWAY
Once decorated with engravings and paintings, but now in deteriorated condition.
THE SHAFT
DEPTH 5 m
This area has one of the most impressive scenes in the cave: THE DEAD MAN.
1 A man fights against a bison while a rhinoceros escapes to the left.
2 A bison with its head down shakes its tail as if it were in an attack position.
3 A bird's head stick in the scene indicates that the man could have been a spear thrower.
4 Signs that seem to be made with a kind of spear.
Scale in meters
0 5 10
250 m
TOTAL LENGTH

4. Students are expected to mention the following captions: Hall of the Bulls, Axial Gallery, The Nave, Great Black Cow, The Crossed Bison, The Passage way, The Shaft, The Apse, and Chamber of the Felines. How did they paint them? The objects, lamps, weapons, ornaments.

4 The captions

In infographics the blocks of texts are commonly marked with captions. They organize similar topics and build the sections in an infographic. This helps give us an overview of the subject to be presented.

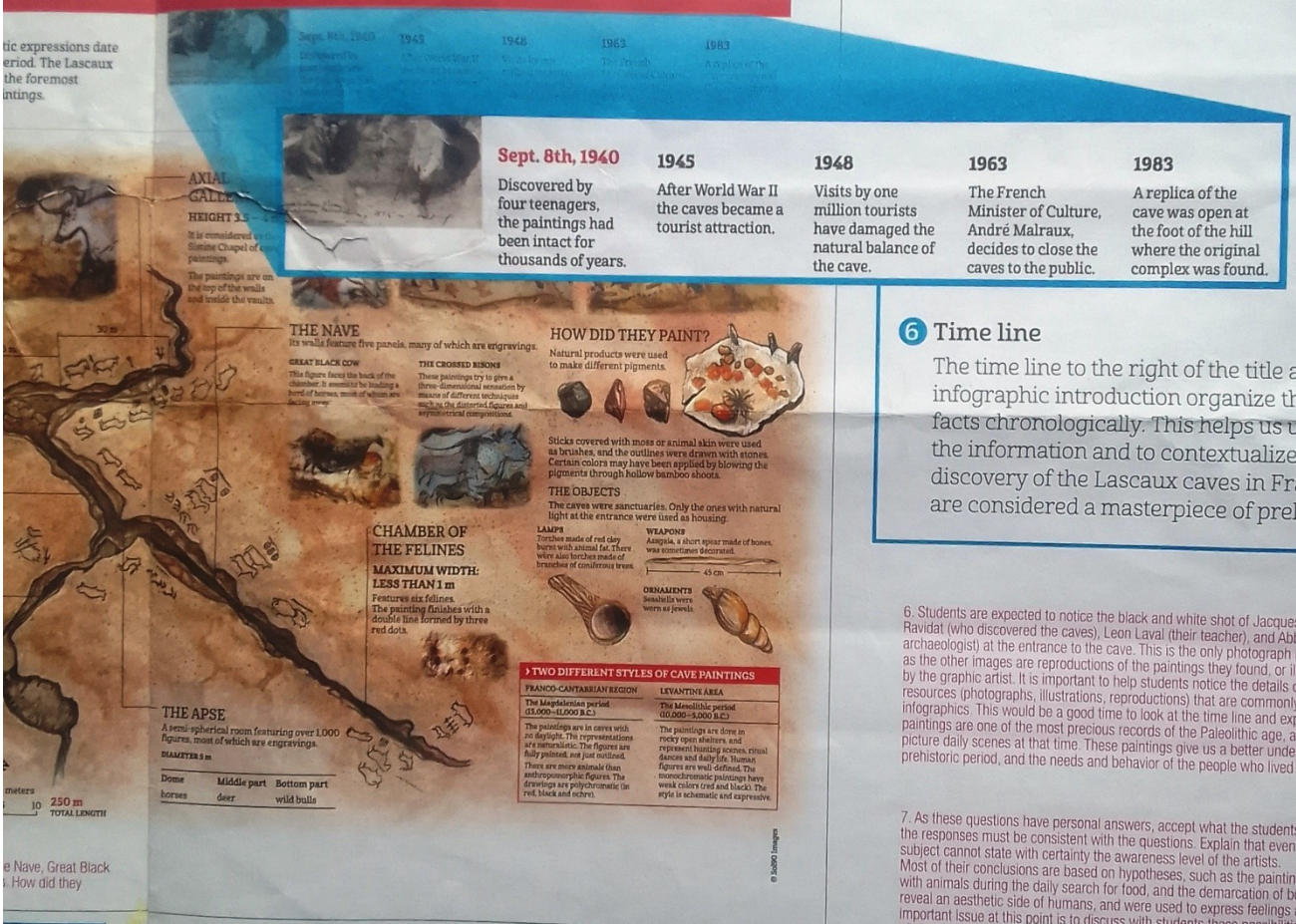
In this infographic "The halls" caption is more emphasized than the others (the font size is bigger and it is written in bold letters), probably because it is linked to a piece of information: the caves are divided into rooms. They are explored individually by means of other highlights and their corresponding captions.

- Point out the other captions in the infographic.

7 The animals depicted

In the infographic some reproductions of the cave paintings are clear examples of what is written in texts, such as the Great Black Cow and the Crossed Bison. Look at the images, read the texts, and then think about the following questions:

- Why did Paleolithic peoples depict so many animals in their paintings?
- Would they only be reproducing daily scenes? Or would they be trying to send a message?
- Would these images be the first records of human communication, which later became writing?


Sept. 8th, 1940
Discovered by four teenagers, the paintings had been intact for thousands of years.
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After World War II the caves became a tourist attraction.
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The French Minister of Culture, André Malraux, decides to close the caves to the public.
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A replica of the cave was open at the foot of the hill where the original complex was found.
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Its walls feature five panels, many of which are engravings.
GREAT BLACK COW
THE CROSSED BISONS
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Natural products were used to make different pigments.
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The caves were sanctuaries. Only the ones with natural light at the entrance were used as housing.
LAMPS
WEAPONS
ORNAMENTS
CHAMBER OF THE FELINES
MAXIMUM WIDTH: LESS THAN 1 m
Features six felines. The painting finishes with a double line formed by three red dots.
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DIAMETER 5 m
Dome
Middle part
Bottom part
horses
deer
wild bulls
TWO DIFFERENT STYLES OF CAVE PAINTINGS
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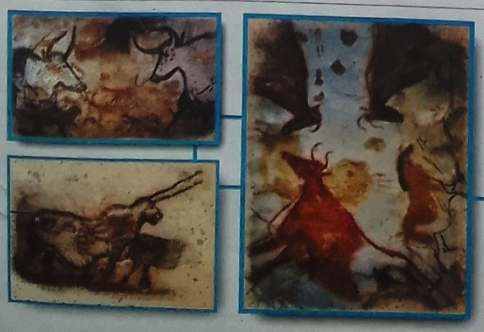
The paintings are done in rocky open shelters, and represent hunting scenes, ritual dances and daily life. Human figures are well-defined. The monochromatic paintings have weak colors (red and black). The style is schematic and expressive.
© Jupiter Images

6 Time line

The time line to the right of the title and the infographic introduction organize the relevant facts chronologically. This helps us understand the information and to contextualize the discovery of the Lascaux caves in France, which are considered a masterpiece of prehistory.



5 Meaningful images

The idea of presenting so many reproductions of the cave painting details is not only to illustrate the infographic, but to highlight the important details these images reveal. Look carefully at some of the most meaningful paintings in the caves, such as the almost 3.5 meter-long bulls, and the huge and mysterious two-horned animals that seems to lead the others into the caves.

6. Students are expected to notice the black and white shot of Jacques Marsal and Marce Ravidat (who discovered the caves), Leon Laval (their teacher), and Abbe Breuil (the archaeologist) at the entrance to the cave. This is the only photograph in the infographic, as the other images are reproductions of the paintings they found, or illustrations done by the graphic artist. It is important to help students notice the details of the iconographic resources (photographs, illustrations, reproductions) that are commonly used in infographics. This would be a good time to look at the time line and explain that the cave paintings are one of the most precious records of the Paleolithic age, as they possibly picture daily scenes at that time. These paintings give us a better understanding of the prehistoric period, and the needs and behavior of the people who lived back then.

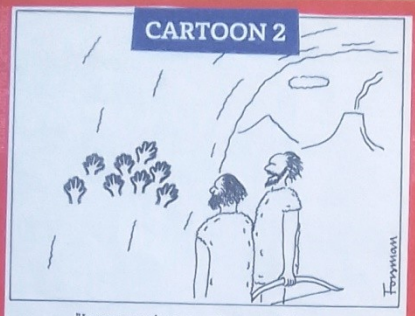
7. As these questions have personal answers, accept what the students produce. However, the responses must be consistent with the questions. Explain that even scholars of the subject cannot state with certainty the awareness level of the artists.
Most of their conclusions are based on hypotheses, such as the paintings depict fights with animals during the daily search for food, and the demarcation of borders, or that they reveal an aesthetic side of humans, and were used to express feelings and ideas. The most important issue at this point is to discuss with students these possibilities, and not to think of other hypotheses.

#POST READING

1 Look at the cartoons and think about the following questions.

CARTOON 1

CARTOON 2



CARTOON 3

a) Are these cartoons funny or not? Why?

Personal answer.

b) Is there any criticism in any of them? If so, in which one? What is the criticism?

Suggested answers: Cartoon 1 is about the idea among researchers that cave paintings might picture religious rituals of prehistoric people (although it could be just a child's drawing done for fun). Cartoon 2 is about the concept of modern art, according to which anything can be considered art, even hand prints on a wall.

c) In cartoon 1, the father is angry at the boy. What about cartoon 3? Why does the boy ask his mother about her humor?

Suggested answer: Because the boy knows he did something wrong (he painted a wall in the living room without permission and his mother will be angry at him).

What do you think of people who paint walls or furniture just for fun and without permission? Discuss it with a friend and share your ideas with your classmates and the teacher.

The goal of this activity is to make students think about the purpose of cave paintings: were they art for prehistoric people? Help students to make some links to modern art, especially graffiti.

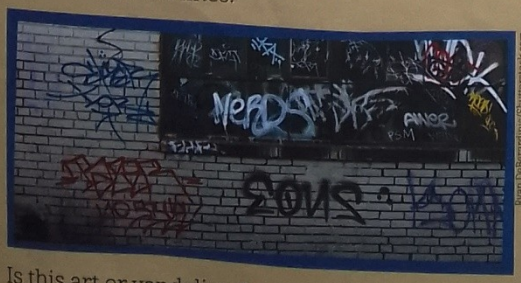
2 **As you saw in the infographic and in the cartoons, drawing on the walls is not something new in history. But nowadays, it can cause trouble!** Raise students' awareness about graffiti art × tags. Tell them that despite the quality of the drawing, legally it can be considered vandalism if it's not authorized. Some people say it is a form of expression.

a) Have you ever seen any drawings on walls in the city/town where you live? ( ) Yes. ( ) No. Personal answer.

b) What do we call these drawings?

Graffiti/tags.

c) Is it considered art or vandalism? How can we spot the differences? Look at the photos below and write your ideas in the lines.


Ryan DeBerardinis/Shutterstock.com

Is this art or vandalism?

Personal answer.

Nakuro/Shutterstock.com

Is this art or vandalism?

Personal answer.

#RESEARCH TIME

As students will have to do some research on graffiti artists, schedule a class in the computer lab at school, if there is one. Help students with the aspects they have to research on the artists and their works. Divide students into pairs or groups of three so that all the artists will be presented on a scheduled day.

As we have discussed, graffiti art is sometimes considered vandalism by some people. However, it is an exciting street art movement. Here are some well-known street artists around the world:

a) Banksy
b) Shepard Fairey
c) Futura 2000
d) Invader
e) Mr. Brainwash (or MBW)
f) Dondi White
g) Retna
h) Blek le Rat (or Xavier Prou)
i) Eduardo Kobra

To learn more about them let's do some research. In pairs or groups of three, choose one artist from the list and organize a short presentation. Remember to include:

- A short biography and a photo of the artist (if possible).
- An example of the artist's painting. Observe the elements that make the painting, such as lines, colors, volumes, perspective.
- What does the artist want to express with the painting? Set the message in time and space, by observing the theme and its meanings.

Now, pay attention to the place where you live. Is there more graffiti art or more tags in public spaces? When walking around, take photos of an example of graffiti art and tag. Print the photos in A4 size and bring them to class. Organize a collective graffiti wall of photos with your classmates at school.

On the day of the research presentation, the groups will have to bring to class the photos they took. Tell students that each group has to bring one example of graffiti art and one example of vandalism. Help students find a collective wall in a place so that the entire school can see it, if possible. If not, the collective wall can be in the classroom.

On the day set by the teacher, present your findings to your teacher and classmates.

#IT'S YOUR TURN

"When in Rome, do as the Romans do" – this is a popular English idiom. It means that we have to follow other people's habits or procedures when we are in an unfamiliar situation. So, we are going back in time and paint the walls in a cave like prehistoric people did. Remember that the cave paintings tell us a story.

This can be a collective project. Students decide on what they are going to picture: a day at school or another daily routine they have. Emphasize the idea of registering the image of day in their lives, just as the prehistoric people did.

You will need:

- brown paper (paper bags or brown construction paper);
- chalk, crayons and paint in natural earth tones;
- paint brush and spray bottle (this last one is optional).

How to do it:

1. Tear a large piece of the brown paper off. Then, crumple it into a ball. This will give a cave-like texture to the paper.
2. Open the paper and outline your drawing. Before doing it, think about a story you want to draw on it.
3. After outlining it, fill in the drawings with paint. Use the paintbrush or the crayons.
4. If possible, use some gouache diluted in water and put it the spray bottle. Use it to print your hands or feet on your "cave." These were used as signatures for cave paintings.
5. After painting your "cave," hang it on the wall along with the paintings of your classmates.

Do you know that there are cave paintings all over the world? And that some are in Brazil?

Tell students that people tend to think that cave paintings are only in Europe, but there are many others around the world.

Project schedule

Who
What
When